

## TITLE : Did You P.T.S. today?

### INTRODUCTION

Relationships largely depend upon interpersonal communication. Our style of interaction and communication impacts our relationships with others. Having proper manners, being polite, courteous, saying “Please”, “Thank you”, “Sorry” (PTS!) at appropriate times helps us to develop, promote, maintain and mend our relationships. It is best to learn early in life how to get along with people and have positive social interactions.

We must be polite so that everyone’s life is stress free and we too enjoy happier and more satisfying social interactions and relationships.

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|----------------------------------|---|--|
| <b>1. Objectives</b>             | : | By the end of the session, students will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand the importance of polite behaviour and good manners</li> <li>• Know the appropriate manners that are required for various situations</li> </ul> |
| <b>2. Time</b>                   | : | 35 minutes   |
| <b>3. Life skills being used</b> | : | Self awareness, Critical thinking, Creative thinking   |
| <b>4. Advance preparations</b>   | : | 1. Blackboard 2. Chalk 3. Select students to carry out the role plays, games and share scripts with them.  |
| <b>5. Linkages</b>               | : | Please see Contents  |
| <b>6. Methodologies</b>          | : | Role plays, Group work, Discussion   |
| <b>7. Process</b>                | : |  |



**Step 1:**

**Please read the Fact Sheet carefully and go through this session well in advance before you carry it out with the students.**

**Step 2:**

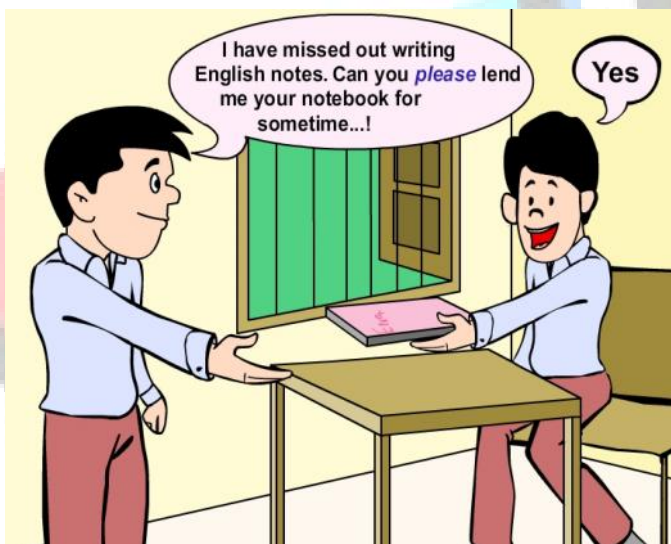
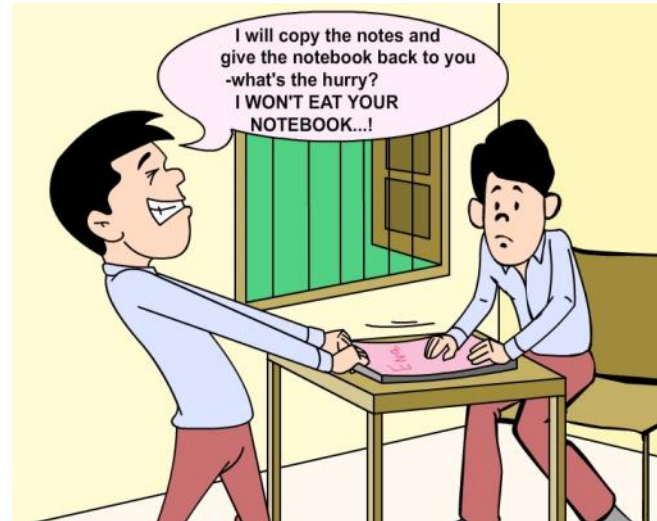
Greet the students and introduce the topic by stating that our behaviour, the way we speak, the way we socially interact with one another determines other people’s

behaviour towards us. State that today's session will start with interesting role plays. Let us see two role plays and then proceed further.

Ask the students whom you had pre-selected to perform the short role plays in the space available in the front of the classroom.

## Role Play Scenario-1

"Harmeet is a pleasant mannered popular student of his class. He is very helpful and thus is liked by most students of his class. Today after the English period, another student Kamal, came to his desk and just took away Harmeet's English notebook as he wanted to copy Harmeet's notes. Harmeet tried to hold on to his notebook but Kamal snatched it from his hands. Harmeet ran after Kamal and demanded that he return the notebook. Kamal said "Abhi notes copy kar ke dey donga naa -jaldi kya hai. Teri notebook kha thodi jaaonga!" ("I will copy the notes and



give the notebook back to you – what's the hurry? I won't eat up your notebook!") Harmeet said that he still has to write a few things and anyway Kamal should ask him before taking away his notebook. Hearing this Kamal threw the notebook on the floor and said – "Yeh ley apni notebook. Aiyse aur bahut meil jayeenge!" ("Here is your notebook. I can get many more of this kind!") Harmeet felt hurt and humiliated and was wondering what wrong he has done.

## Role Play scenario-2

"Harmeet is a pleasant mannered popular student of his class. He is very helpful and thus is liked by most students of his class. Today after the English period, another student Kamal came to his desk said to him: "Harmeet I have missed out on writing English notes. Since your English is very good, can I please seek your help? Can you please lend me your notebook for some time so that I can complete my notes?" Harmeet said "yes" gladly and passed on the notebook to Kamal after he had completed his own notes. After a few minutes Kamal came back to return the notebook. While returning the notebook fell on the floor. Kamal immediately picked up the notebook, dusted it with his handkerchief and returned the notebook to Harmeet and said "I'm sorry that the notebook fell down. Thank you so much Harmeet! I feel you are a very good friend. I appreciate your helpful nature!" Harmeet felt pleased and happy!"

### Step 3:

Applaud the role plays and ask the students **“What was the difference between the first and the second role play?” “What kind of behaviour would you prefer to receive from others?” “That shown in the first or the second role play?” “What made things easy and cheerful in the second role play?”**

**Expected Answers:** the first role play reflected very rude behaviour by Kamal, Kamal did not respect Harmeet nor seemed to have basic manners, the second role play showed how good manners can make things easy for everyone and spread happiness all around. We prefer the kind of behaviour shown in the second role play. The good behaviour like coming and asking Harmeet politely and use of words like “Please”, “Thank you”, “Sorry”, by Kamal changed the whole scenario.

#### Note for Teachers:

The role plays reflect a common everyday occurrence as to how **simple modifications** in our behaviour –utilizing ‘please’, ‘thank you’, and ‘sorry’ - that reflect politeness, good manners and respect for others can make things easier and spread cheer around. Emphasize that everyone desires to be treated this way, with courtesy and politeness.

### Step 4:

State that –as we saw in the simple role play- in life basic courtesies and manners help us achieve our goals and create good will and cheer. Ask the students **“Why does it help to have good manners and use words and phrases like - “Please”, “Thank you”, “Sorry”, - with people?”**

**Expected Responses:** It shows our respect for them, it shows we value them and their efforts, saying ‘sorry’ reflects our mature character and that we did not mean to do it or it was a mistake for which we apologize, it makes even strangers want to help us, there will be less violence and accidents, it shows we care for all good things, if we do this we too can expect this kind of behaviour from others, they make basis for learning other manners in later life .



#### Note for Teachers:

Applaud the responses. Add that ‘Please, ‘Thank you’, and ‘Sorry’ are three of the **most powerful** phrases in our vocabulary, as well as the most underutilized! State that using these phrases shows our polite behaviour, our respect and affection. By offering common courtesies like “You first!” and using phrases like “Please?”, “Thank you!”, “Sorry!” we send the message to people that we are considerate, and we not only value them but also appreciate their efforts. It says we do not view them as inanimate objects, but recognize their humanness. All this makes for a happy and joyous environment.

Early use of basic manners and polite behaviour makes it **easy for us to acquire skills as adults** – eg. how to face an **interview for a job**, how to behave with other colleagues and acquaintances so that we leave a favourable impression, how to interact with seniors, how to behave with family members including spouse, how to speak on the phone etc. Thus **demonstrating** manners and courteous behaviour **now** helps us at all times.

## Step 5:

State that being polite, courteous and with good manner has obvious advantages for everyone and adds to the society. But sometimes we see people who do not offer basic courtesies and manners. Ask **“Why some people don’t use these phrases, when needed, in their daily interaction and end up hurting themselves and others? Can they learn manners at this stage?”**

### Expected Responses:

- They have not learnt to be polite, some people think that being rude is the right thing to do as it reflects their strength or position, they think no end of themselves, they do not care about others, maybe they do not know better, Yes they can pick up good manners even now, it is never too late to learn good things, etc.

### Note for Teachers:

People who are rude and mannerless may **seem to be the gainer** for sometime (e.g. getting ahead in a queue) but ultimately people resent them and do not cooperate with them. Thus, in the long run, such people are neither very popular nor very successful. Thus everyone should and can learn to be polite to make their own and everyone else’s life easy.

Some people may find it difficult to say ‘sorry’. **No one becomes small by saying ‘sorry’!** Rather it adds to the person’s stature and acceptability. On the other hand ‘not saying sorry when needed’ can **lead to continuing pain, hurt and strife** – with serious consequences including breakdown of communication and, eventually, even the relationship.

## Step 6: Game

Ask 5 students you have selected earlier to get up, walk across to five other students, and pick up (or take out from their bag) things like: a pencil, eraser, sharpener, notebook etc and go back and sit down on their seats without saying anything. Tell the five students in advance what to do so that it comes as a total surprise to the other students.

Now ask another group of 5 students to go across to 5 other students and politely ask for something: eg. “Please can I borrow your pencil?” and say “thank you” after collecting the article, and then go back to their respective seats. Again tell these five students in advance what they should do.



## Step 7:

Now ask the students from whom the things were taken/borrowed:

**“How did you feel when your articles were taken away/borrowed?”**

**Expected Responses from First Group:** we felt angry and helpless, we felt as if we don’t matter or even exist, as if we being robbed, we would not like to help such people in future,



**Expected Responses from Second Group:** we felt pleased and wanted to help such people, we felt that the person is only borrowing and not “taking away” the things, we would like to help such people in future too,

### Note for Teachers:

Let a brief discussion take place. Ask questions like “What did we learn from the responses?” To continue the discussion, state that “since we do not like to be in the position of the members of ‘group one’ of our game, is it proper that we place anybody else in this position?” Such behaviour puts people off and they may not want to cooperate with us in future. We may lose –unknowingly – the chances of a fulfilling friendship just because we lacked courtesies! What a major loss!

Tell the students to start showing their manners in interactions with their parents, teachers and friends too –manners at home, manners in the street and being a guest etc (Refer Fact Sheet). Their parents will be overjoyed that their children have good manners and are speaking to them with respect, for respect shows that you have good manners. Emphasize that sharing resources – space, facilities, TV- maintaining privacy and confidentiality of other members etc are also part of good family manners. Don’t forget to ask the students who took the items to return them to their owners.

### Key Messages:

- Our courteous behaviour and good manners reflect that we are considerate to others and recognize their humanness
- Being polite – saying “Please, Thank you, and Sorry” (PTS) where ever required makes everyone’s life easy and joyous.
- We should exhibit our manners with our parents, teachers and friends and even strangers.

### Ideas for Learning More:

- Mentally rehearse how will you go upto the student of your class who is good in maths and request her/his help in solving a maths problem.

## FACT SHEET

### Helping Children with Manners

Manners may differ from country to country and from time to time. However certain manners are common every where and do survive from one decade to the next. This is because manners make life easier for everybody.

There are three important ideas behind the good manners we use today: custom, consideration, and common sense. Custom is the habit of doing certain things like shaking hands and saying “Namaste”. Consideration is the most important idea behind all good manners. Almost always, being considerate is being well -mannered. Consideration is simply thinking about the way the other person feels.

When we say “Please” before requesting another person’s assistance we send the message that we value the person’s individuality and humanness, and at the same time our “need” for their assistance. Saying “Thank you” sends the message that we have valued their help and are grateful for the same. “The word “sorry” conveys many things as per the context in which it is used. It may convey a polite “regret” (‘I am sorry I will not be able to come to your birthday party!’), apology (‘I am sorry that your book fell down from my hands!’) and sincere desire to make amends and reduce hurt (‘I am sorry that I said a few harsh things.’). All of these phrases enrich our social interactions and bring joy and happiness all around. It also improves chances for future cooperation.



Being rude to someone is a bad manner, not because a book says so, but because it causes hurt feelings. Nearly all good manners have an element of common sense. If you are standing in the rear of a crowded room, it's not reasonable-or good manners-to try pushing your way to the front so you can get out first.

These are the basic ideas we want to teach our children when we are trying to instill good manners-simple kindness, consideration, and common sense. The following suggestions written for and directed towards children may give some added authority in the matter of what is common courtesy and what is not.

#### How to say 'I'm Sorry'

They can be the hardest two words to utter. But if you're going to apologize, make it count. Here are guidelines to an effective apology from Sheila Quinn Simpson, author of "Apology: The Importance and Power of Saying 'I'm Sorry' ":

#### **An apology must be sincere and without qualifications :**

Avoid the phrase "I'm sorry, but ..." "But" is a divisive word and can negate the intention of an apology because it sounds defensive and self -serving.

**An apology should be specific and stem from one's own awareness :**

You shouldn't feel forced to apologize because you got caught. Avoid the generalized "I'm sorry for whatever." It indicates you don't want to own your behavior and minimizes your apology.

**Avoid the phrase "I'm sorry you feel that way...":**

Because it is nearly always followed by "but." People are entitled to feel the way they feel. The goal is to extend good listening skills to learn what led them to feel the way they do.

**Apologies are not purchased :**

A person may receive a large monetary award for an accident, yet still yearn to hear words of apology and remorse from the person who caused the accident.

**It is never too late to apologize :**

We have the power to transform lives. If it is timely, all the better. Yet whenever we can apologize, even years later, it is the call of integrity to do so.

**How someone receives an apology is up to them :**

All we can do is extend healing and hope for renewal through our courage of being accountable, apologizing, and not repeating the harmful behavior.

**Manners at Home :**

Home is where you learn to get along with people. The closer you live with other people, the more important good manners are. Everybody in a household should respect the rights and feelings of everybody else. Try to listen when others in the family have something to say. Even a little brother or sister who can't yet read or a grandmother who seems quite old has a right to an opinion'.

It is important for members of a family to consider each other's privacy. No matter how crowded a home is, everyone in it has a right to some place that is his own. Here are some **privacy don'ts**:

- Don't open a closed door until you have knocked and waited for permission to enter.
- Don't go into anyone else's almirah, desk, box, or papers at home or anywhere else without his permission.
- Don't read anyone's mail or anything he has written (for example, a diary) unless he asks you to.
- Don't discuss the private affairs of your family with outsiders or tell about a family problem.



Another important part of family good manners is **sharing**. You share the TV set and the telephone and the bathroom and maybe a bedroom or a closet or a desk. You share

the work. This means cleaning up after yourself and sharing the responsibility for the safety of everyone in the house.

## Table and Eating:

Most families have established their own table manners that are important to them. Here are a few that should be remembered when you are at home and when you are a guest

- Never reach for any food that is not right in front of you. Ask someone to pass it. And if you are passing something, don't help yourself along the way.
- If your food is too hot, wait for it to cool. Don't blow on it.
- If you put something in your mouth that's too hot, don't spit it out. Reach for your water and take a quick swallow.
- Don't talk with your mouth full.
- Don't be upset if you spill something. It happens all the time.



## Manners on the Street:

Unless you are at home or at a friend's house, you are on public property. Remember this property is used by many people, it is especially important that everyone use common sense and good manners. Here are some street don'ts:

- Keep the streets clean. Don't be a litterbug.
- Don't walk in bunches or groups so that you block others' way.



- Don't stop to chat in the middle of the sidewalk. Step to the side so that people won't have to move around you.
- Don't stare at or make fun of anyone, no matter how strange they may look.
- Don't mark on buildings or other public property.
- If you bump into someone or step on his toe, say you're sorry.



## Telephone Manners:

- Always give the person you are calling plenty of time to get to the phone before you hang up.
- If the person who answers is not the one you want, give your name and ask if you may speak to the person you've called. Ask, "May I speak to Mr. Tilak?" not "Is Mr. Tilak home!" If he isn't in, you may leave a message.
- If someone dials your number accidentally, accept his apology. Everyone sometimes dials a wrong number. No one intends to. If you accidentally dial a wrong number, excuse yourself.
- It is considerate to make phone calls at a time when they will not disturb people. Try not to call too early in the morning (before about 9:00) or too late at night (after about 9:30). Try not to call at mealtime.
- It's handy to keep a pencil and paper near the phone. If someone calls a member of the family who is not at home, ask the caller if he would like to leave a message. If he does, be sure to get his name and number. If you take a message, be sure to remember to deliver it!



## A Final Note to Teachers / Parents :

You have most likely already dealt with most of the above suggestions with your students or children. However, when it comes to manners, children need frequent reminders. One of the best ways to teach manners is to role-play, the teacher/ parent takes the role of host or hostess, guest, salesperson, someone at the other end of the telephone, etc. This reduces the child's conception that the teacher /parent is nagging or lecturing, and it is a technique that is likely to work.

# In sports, nice guys finish first, says Harvard study

The Times of India, 21 March 2008

Washington : Screaming sports coaches and cutthroat tycoons have it wrong: Nice guys do finish first, a new study suggests.

The Harvard university study involved 100 Boston area college students playing the same game over and over – a punishment heavy version of the classic one - on - one brinkmanship of prisoner's dilemma. The research appears in Thursday's edition of the journal Nature.

Common game theory has held that punishment makes two equals cooperate. But when people compete in repeated games, punishment fails to deliver, said study author Martin Nowak. He is director of the evolutionary dynamics lab at Harvard where the

study was conducted.

“On the individual level, we find that those who use punishments are the losers,” Nowak said his experiments found. Those who escalate the conflict very often wound up doomed.

“It’s a very positive message,” said study co-author David Rand, a Harvard biology graduate student researcher. “In general, the thing that is most, sort of rational and best for your own self-interest is to be nice.”

The study looked at games between equals. Punishment does seem to have a place in games when one player is dominant and needs to enforce submission, Nowak said.